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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-05 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-05 AEC-05 EB-07 OMB-01 /073 W

----- 018033

R 181745Z NOV 74

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8828

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 6394

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, IT

SUBJECT: DRC MULTILATERAL REVIEW - ITALY

REF: A. USNATO 6115

B. ROME 15935

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON NOVEMBER 15 DRC REVIEWED ITALIAN FORCE PLANS FOR 1975-79 PERIOD. REVIEW FOCUSED ON DISQUIETING EFFECT ITALIAN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE HAVING ON CURRENT FORCE CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIAL IMPACT ON FUTURE PLANS, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO MANPOWER PROBLEMS. ITALY APPARENTLY HAS ALREADY IMPLEMENTED A SUBSTANTIAL CUT IN ARMY PERSONNEL BY REDUCING NUMBER OF CONSCRIPTS ANNUALLY DRAFTED INTO SERVICE. GEN BUTTELLI, WHO HEADED HIGH-LEVEL EXPERT TEAM FROM ROME, MADE LENGTHY RAMBLING STATEMENT, WHICH, IN ADDITION TO ADDRESSING ITALIAN FORCE PLANS, COVERED MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE AND AD-70. END SUMMARY.

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1. DRC ON NOVEMBER 15 CONDUCTED MULITALTERAL REVIEW OF ITALIAN FORCE PLANS AS PRESENTED IN ITALIAN DPQ(74) REPLY. IN INTRODUCING TEAM HEADED BY GEN. BUTTELLI, ITALIAN DRC REP (ADM. MACCHIAVELLI) STRESSED THAT HIGH LEVEL AND SIZE

OF TEAM DEMONSTRATED SERIOUSNESS AND IMPORTANCE ITALY ATTACHES TO NATO FORCE PLANNING AND DRC MULTIALTERAL REVIEW. ADM. MACCHIAVELLI THEN DREW ATTENTION TO CURRENT ITALIAN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND APOLOGIZED FOR TARDINESS OF DPQ(74) REPLY. HE EXPLAINED TARDINESS WAS CAUSED BY ITALIAN PLANNING SYSTEM WHICH PREVENTS ITALY FROM FORWARDING ITS FULL REPLY BEFORE MID-SEPTEMBER AT THE EARLIEST.

2. CHAIRMAN HUMPHREYS CALLED ON FORCE PLANNING DIRECTOR BRABAND, WHO HEADED NATO TEAM DURING TRILATERAL SESSION IN ROME, TO SUMMARIZE ITALIAN DEFENSE EFFORT. BRABAND DESCRIBED ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION AS NOT REASSURING AND OBSERVED THAT FINANCIAL PROBLEMS PRECLUDE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANY NATO 1975-80 FORCE GOALS. BRABAND DREW SPECIAL ATTENTION TO:

A) PLANNED REDUCTION IN CONSCRIPT SERVICE, WHICH HE ADDED IS IMPOSED BY PARLIAMENT AND IS SUBJECT OF ONGOING CONSULTATION WITH NATO;

B) PLANS TO RESTRUCTURE ARMED FORCES, WHICH HE ADDED IS AN EFFORT BY ITALIAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES TO MAKE BETTER USE OF DIMINISHING RESOURCES;

C) ECONOMIC PROBLEMS (ESPECIALLY ALMOST TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL ENERGY SOURCES AND HIGH INFLATION) WHICH HARBINGER SUBSTANTIAL REAL TERM REDUCTION IN DEFENSE EFFORT;

D) BILATERAL CONTACTS BETWEEN U.S. AND ITALY ON COLLOCATED AIR FORCE OPERATING BASES (NOTING THAT US, AFTER NOT APPROACHING ITALY FOR "SOME TIME", NOW HAS ESTABLISHED CONTACT);

E) WITHDRAWAL OF HONEST JOHN EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY PROJECTED WHICH, WHEN COUPLED WITH SCHEDULED WITHDRAWAL
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OF US SERGEANT BATTALION, RESULTS IN 6 MONTH GAP IN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY BEFORE ARMY CAN INTRODUCE LANCE;

F) WAR RESERVES SHORTAGES, ESPECIALLY ARMY AND TO SOME EXTENT AIR FORCE;

G) FAILURE TO ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT;

H) SIZABLE REDUCTION IN NAVY TONNAGE;

I) FAILURE TO CONVERT MAJOR NAVAL COMBAT UNITS TO DISTILLATE FUEL, NOTING LOGISTIC DRAWBACKS SINCE U.S. AND UK SHIPS OPERATING IN MEDITERRANEAN UTILIZED DISTILLATE FUEL;
AND

J) SLIPPAGES IN AIRCRAFT MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS.

3. MC REP (GEN. TOMMASINI) SAID MAIN PROBLEM IS THAT PROPOSED REDUCTION IN CONSCRIPT PERIOD WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF ITALIAN FORCES, ESPECIALLY THE ARMY. HE CITED POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT ON PERSONNEL STRENGTHS AND TRAINING OF CONSCRIPTS, WHO MAKE UP LARGE PORTION OF ITALIAN FORCES; HE HOPED THAT GOI WOULD POSTPONE REDUCTION IN LENGTH OF CONSCRIPT PERIOD AND ADDRESS REDUCTION WITHIN CONTEXT OF FUTURE RESTRUCTURING PLANS. SHAPE REP (COL. HOOTEN) VOICE CONCERN THAT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WILL RESULT IN EVEN FURTHER REDUCTIONS THAN THOSE OUTLINED IN DPQ(74), AND UNDERLINED THIS WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS WEAKENING OF OVERALL FORCE LEVELS AND CAPABILITIES.

4. GENERAL BUTTELLI, IN A 30-MINUTE RAMBLING STATEMENT, EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO CHAIRMAN FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW POLICY ORIENTED MULTILATERAL REVIEW PATTERN. HE SAID NEW APPROACH INCREASES COOPERATION BETWEEN NATO AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES IN PLANNING FIELD. REGARDING MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE, HE SAID INTRODUCTION OF CONCRETE, PRECISE GUIDELINES IS DESIRABLE AND IS A VALID MEANS OF EMPHASIZING DEFENSE PROBLEMS. IN MANY COUNTRIES THE SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS BECOME MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT IN FACE OF INTERNAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PRESSURES. ITALY THEREFORE AGREES ON THE NEED TO REVITALIZE PLANNING PROCESS THROUGH
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CLOSER AND MORE DIRECT PARTICIPATION BY MINISTERS, STARTING WITH THE PREPARATION OF KEY ELEMENTS OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE FOR PRESENTATION TO MINISTERS IN THE SIMPLEST AND MOST COMPLETE MANNER. HE THEN NOTED ITALIAN IDEAS ON THE CHOICE OF KEYELEMENTS TO BE PUT FORWARD TO MINISTERS; HE SAID THE CRITERION FOR SUCH A CHOICE IS SLECTION OF A FEW ITEMS WHICH ALLOW AN EXCAHNGE OF THOUGHTS ON THOSE BASIC CONCEPTS WHICH IMPACT ON ALL THE OTHER ELEMENTS. IN HIS VIEW, THE KEY ELEMENTS "DURATION OF HOSTILITIES" AND "WARNING OF WAR" DEAL WITH BASIC CONCEPTS BUT WOULD NOT ALLOW FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE MINISTERIAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BECAUSE THESE ELEMENTS SHOULD BE BASED ON EXISTING NATO DOCUMENTS AND THE MILITARY APPRECIATION. CONTRARILY, THE KEY ELEMENTS DEALING WITH "RESOURCES" AND "PRIORITIES" COVER ELEMENTARY POINTS WHICH MINISTERS COULD USEFULLY DISCUSS.

5. GEN. BUTTELLI THEN REFERRED TO THE US DISCUSSION PAPER ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE. HE NOTED THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES HAVE DECLARED THAT THEY DO NOT INTEND FOR THIS DOCUMENT TO "OVERTHROW" NATO'S CURRENT STRATEGY OR NATO'S AGREED ASSESSMENT OF WARSAW PACT CAPABILITIES, AND THAT THE AIM OF THE US PAPER IS NOT ACTUAL DRAFT GUIDANCE LANGUAGE BUT RATHER REVITALIZING THE PLANNING PROCESS AND DIRECTING FORCE IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS. HE

SAID ITALY ACCEPTS THESE DECLARATIONS BUT FEELS THAT THE CURRENT US PAPER GOES WELL BEYOND THESE AIMS AND DECLARATIONS. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT THE US PAPER OUTLINES A PLANNING SYSTEM INVOLVING OVERALL ALLIANCE ACTIVITIES AT HIGH POLITICAL LEVELS. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SYSTEM WOULD LEAD TO A CHANGE IN THE CURRENT PLANNING PROCESS BECAUSE IT INCLUDES ACTIVITIES AND CONCEPTS THAT GO BEYOND THE PROCESS ITSELF. HE STRESSED HIS REMARKS DO NOT MEAN THAT NATO SHOULD NOT CONSIDER THESE SUGGESTIONS. GEN. BUTTELLI THEN SAID A FEW PARTICULAR POINTS IN THE US PAPER NEED ADDITIONAL REMARKS:

A. APPRAISAL OF WARSAW PACT CAPABILITY. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UPDATING THE APPRAISAL MEETS A FORCE PLANNING REQUIREMENT, HOWEVER, OBJECTIVE DIFFICULTIES EXIST IN ASSESSING ENEMY'S WEAK POINTS AND WHERE UNCERTAINTIES EXIST IT IS BEST TO USE THE MOST UNFAVORABLE (TO NATO) ASSUMPTION.

B. CONVENTIONAL BALANCE. HE SAID THE U.S. ASSESSMENT
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IS FAIRLY OPTIMISTIC AND AN UNDUE OPTIMISM COULD PROVOKE A REDUCTION IN DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS, AND IN ADDITION COULD BE EXPLOITED BY THE SOVIET UNION, FOR EXAMPLE THROUGH FURTHER ADVOCACY OF DEMUNCLEARIZATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

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SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-05 AEC-05 EB-07 OMB-01 /073 W

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C. STANDARDIZATION. HE SAID ITALY HAS EXPRESSED ITS

VIEWS IN OTHER NATO FORA AND STRESSED THAT ONE OF MAIN DIFFICULTIES IN STANDARDIZING EQUIPMENT IS THAT THERE IS NO NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN PRODUCTION BASE WHICH WOULD ENABLE COUNTRIES TO OVERCOME CRITICAL RE-SUPPLY DEFICIENCIES. HE PROCLAIMED ITALIAN INTEREST IN ANY FORM OF COOPERATIVE VENTURES, PARTICULARLY THOSE PROMOTING EUROPEAN INTEGRATION.

D. RATIONALIZATION AND FLEXIBILITY. HE SAID REATIONALIZATION AND FLEXIBILITY ARE VALID FROM BOTH CONCEPTUAL AND PRAGMATIC POINTS OF VIEW, HOWEVER, THEIR IMPLEMENTATION INVOLVES CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY WITHIN SOUTHERN REGION, WHICH IS CHARACTERIZED BY A PLURALITY OF FRONTS AND WIDE DISTANCES.

6. GEN BUTELLI NOTED THERE ARE INITIATIVES UNDERWAY TO REDUCE THE SCOPE OF THE CURRENT AD-70 SPRING REPORT. HE SAID THE FIRST AD-70 SPRING REPORT WAS INTENDED TO JUDGE COMPLIANCE OF PROGRAMS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE AD-70 STUDY; THIS
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WAS LATER REFINED TO STRESS THE BALANCE BETWEEN FORCES AND RELATED SUPPORTING PROGRAMS. HE ADDED NOW EWG IS ASKED TO RESTRICT THE SPRING REPORT TO ISSUES WHICH NATO HAS NOT DEALT WITH ADEQUATELY ELSEWHERE AND TO ISSUES REQUIRING SPECIAL MOMENTUM. HE INDICATED A PREFERENCE FOR A REPORT THAT ACCENTED ALL PLANNING ACTIVITIES. HE ADDED SUCH A REPORT SHOULD BE BIENNIAL AND REFER TO DIFFERENT REGIONS TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE PLANNING PROCESS. AFTER UNDERLINING THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GUIDANCE AND THE SPRING REPORT, HE SUPPORTED TWO DISTRINCT PHASES: A) PRECISE PLANNING/ GUIDANCE PHASE AND B) PHASE ASCERTAINING COMPLIANCE WITH PLANS.

7. GEN. BUTTELLI THEN TURNED TO ITALIAN FORCE PLANS. HE STRESSED ITALY'S DESIRE TO IMPLEMENT NATO FORCE GOALS, BUT ECONOMIC SITUATION HAS AFFECTED ALL COUNTRIES AND ITALY IN PARTICULAR. HE OBSERVED THAT ITALY'S 1975 DEFENSE BUDGET, ALTHOUGH INCREASED CONSIDERABLY IN MONEY TERMS, HAD NOT PROVED SUFFICIENT DUE TO ABNORMAL PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT COST INCREASES AND HIGH INFLATION. AFTER CITING A RANGE OF DEFICIENT AREAS FROM EQUIPMENT MODERNIZATION THROUGH UNIT READINESS, HE REMARKED THAT CONTINUED PRICE/INFLATION INCREASES MAY CAUSE ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIVE MEASURES WHICH WOULD IMPACT ON FORCE CAPABILITIES. HE INDICATED ITALY WOULD IDENTIFY FURTHER NECESSARY REDUCTIONS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF RE-STRUCTURING PLAN AND IMPLIED FIRST CONSEQUENCE HAS ARRIVED IN FORM OF CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION IN SIZE OF PRESENT FORCES. HE SAID ITALY PLANS A GRADUAL REDUCTION IN UNITS, BUT WILL SAFEGUARD OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY CAREFUL CHOICE OF UNITS. IN CONCLUDING, GEN. BUTTELLI INDICATED HE HAD OUTLINED A DE FACTO SITUATION, BUT EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT BLEAK OUTLOOK IS TEMPORARY IN NATURE.

8. US REP (CLINARD) THANKED GEN. BUTTELLI FOR HIS COMPREHENSIVE REMARKS AND NOTED THAT POINTS RELATED TO US PAPER ON LONG RANGE DEFENSE CONCEPTS ARE CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION IN A SEPARATE SERIES OF DRC MEETINGS ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE. HE REMARKED THAT US IS AWARE OF THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES FACING ITALY AND WISHED THEM SUCCESS IN DEALING WITH THESE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WHICH IMPACT SO NEGATIVELY ON ITALY'S FORCE POSTURE. IN PARTICULAR HE REFERRED TO EFFECTIVENESS PROBLEMS CAUSE BY LOW PEACETIME MANNING OF ARMY COMBAT UNITS, POOR RESERVIST TRAINING

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PROGRAM, AND SHORTAGES IN WAR RESERVE STOCKS WHICH CAST DOUBT ON ITALY'S ABILITY TO SUSTAIN COMBAT OPERATIONS FOR MORE THAN A FEW DAYS. IN RESPONSE, ARMY EXPERT SAID ITALY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO TRAIN LARGE NUMBER OF RESERVISTS BECAUSE IT ONLY MOBILIZES RESERVISTS WHO HAVE SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY WITHIN PAST THREE YEARS; HE EMPHASIZED THAT IN PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AFTER THESE RESERVISTS LEAVE ACTIVE DUTY, MATERIAL CHANGES LITTLE AND UNIT STRUCTURE IS THE SAME. HE FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT THE ROUGHLY TWO THOUSAND RESERVISTS TRAINED ANNUALLY CONSIST OF OFFICERS AND NCOS. US REP REJOINED THAT PROPOSED REDUCTION IS CONSCRIPT PERIOD WOULD REDUCE ACTIVE DUTY TRAINING TIME.

9. FRG REP (CAPT WELZ) ASKED WHAT IS ITALIAN GOAL FOR OPTIMUM CONSCRIPT/REGULAR RATIO. ARMY EXPRT INDICATED THIS QUESTION IS BEING ADDRESSED IN RESTRUCTURING STUDY. CANADIAN REP (COL. SHEFFIELD) ASKED IF ITALY IS CONSIDERING INCENTIVES AS A MEANS OF STRENGTHENING OFFICER/NCO ELEMENTS IN ARMY. EXPERT AGREED ON NEED FOR INCENTIVES AND INDICATED ITALY HAS A LONG TERM RECRUITING PROGRAM UNDERWAY AND IS ADDRESSING PROBLEM FURTHER IN STUDY ON FUTURE FORCE STRUCTURE.

10. IN RESPONSE TO UK REP'S (MACDONALD) QUESTION ON ITALIAN PLANS TO REPLACE MINE COUNTERMEASURE UNITS (MCM) AND POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATIVE CONSTRUCTION AND QUESTION ON DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERWATER SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM FOR USE IN SICILIAN STRAITS, NAVY EXPERT SAID ITALY PLANS TO CONVERT MINESWEEPERS TO MINEHUNTERS (IMPLYING NO POSSIBILITY FOR JOINT CONSTRUCTION VENTURES) AND UNDERWATER SYSTEM IS UNDER STUDY. UK REP NOTED UK HAS FOUND ITTECHNICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DEVELOP AN UNDERWATER SYSTEM FOR GIBRALTAR STRAITS AND EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN UK AND ITALIAN SPECIALISTS.

11. SHAPE REP NOTED ARMY PERSONNEL STRENGTH IS 260 THOUSAND AND THAT DRAFT COUNTRY CHAPTER STATES THIS FIGURE INCLUDES REPEAT INCLUDES CONSCRIPTS UNDERGOING PRIMARY TRAINING. HE CONTRASTED THIS SITUATION WITH DPQ(73) REPORTED STRENGTH OF 260 THOUSAND (SAME AS THIS YEAR) WHICH APPARENTLY DID NOT REPEAT NOT INCLUDE CONSCRIPTS IN TRAINING AND ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION OF PERSONNEL FIGURES. ARMY EXPERT FINESSED RESPONSE BY AVOIDING DISCUSSION OF FIGURES; HE STRESSED ONLY

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THAT ITALY NOW CALLS UP ANNUALLY THREE, INSTEAD OF FOUR, DRAFT CONTINGENTS. SHAPE REP ASKED HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO REVERSE THIS DOWNWARD TREND; EXPERT REPLIED FOUR YEARS. COMMENT: FOLLOWING MEETING, IS FORCE PLANNING DIRECTORATE ARMY EXPERT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH MISSION OFFICER EXPRESSED VIEW THAT ITALY IS REDUCING TOTAL ARMY STRENGTH BY CLOSE TO 60 THOUSAND. HE DESCRIBED THIS AS A REDUCTION IN UNTRAINED PERSONNEL AND WAS MORE TROUBLED BY CONCOMITANT COMPONENT OF PERSONNEL PACKAGE, I.E., LARGE NUMBER OF RAW CONSCRIPTS INTRODUCED DIRECTLY INTO OPERATIONAL UNITS WITHOUT BENEFIT OF PRIOR BASIC TRAINING. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE ANY CLARIFICATION OR ADDITIONAL DETAILS EMBASSY ROME CAN PROVIDE ON PERSONNEL SITUATION. END COMMENT.

12. CHAIRMAN HUMPHREYS HOPED ITALY WOULD COVER QUESTION OF SIZE OF ITALY ARMY DURING NEXT WEEK'S CONSULTATION WITH DPC ON CONSCRIPT PERIOD. ADM. MACCHIAVELLI SAID ITALY WOULD NOT BE READY TO TACKLE THE PERSONNEL QUESTION AT NEXT WEEK'S DPC MEETING CHAIRMAN REJOINED IN THAT CASE ITALY MUST CONSULT WITH NATO SEPARATELY ON THIS ISSUE.

13. FRG REP ASKED GEN. BUTTELLI TO EXPAND ON HIS EARLIER REMARKS ON DENUCLEARIZATION OF THE MED. GEN. BUTTELLI IMPLIED THAT US EMPHASIS ON CONVENTIONAL BALANCE MAY GIVE SOVIETS GROUNDS TO URGE DENUCLEARIZATION OF MED., PARTICULARLY THROUGH WITHDRAWAL OF THE US SIXTH FLEET.

14. CHAIRMAN NOTED NUMBER OF TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILES (130) ITALY PLANS TO ACQUIRE IS SMALL AND SAID PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF FORCE GOAL TO ACQUIRE 14 MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT (MPA) IS DISAPPOINTING, ESPECIALLY SINCE DRC DURING ITS SPRING FORCE GOAL REVIEW HAD ATTACHED SUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE MPA GOAL. HE ADDED DRC HAD EVEN DROPPED SEVERAL OTHER IMPORTANT GOALS IN HOPES OF PROMOTING EARLY ACQUISITION OF MPA. ADM. MACCHIAVELLI SAID HE TOOK SPECIAL NOTE OF CHAIRMAN'S OBSERVATION ON MPA AND WOULD REPORT OBSERVATION TO MOD. ARMY EXPERT SAID ITALY PLANS TO ASSIGN 6 TOW PER BATTALION AND OBVIOUSLY NOT ALL BATTALIONS WILL RECEIVE TOW. CHAIRMAN REPLIED THIS IS COMPARABLE WITH NETHERLANDS' PLANS, AND SAID NATO ENCOURAGEMENT TO NETHERLANDS TO INCREASE DENSITY OF AT WEAPONS PER UNIT APPLIES EQUALLY TO ITALY.

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15. IN CONCLUDING, CHAIRMAN REMINDED DRC OF PARTICULAR ITALIAN WEAKNESSES: COMBAT UNIT MANNING LEVELS, LOW COMBAT REDINESS OF STANDING UNITS, DURE WAR RESERVES SITUATION, AND SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. REFERRING TO ITALY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION AND ITS IMPACT OF DEFENSE, GEN. BUTTELLI IN A BIT OF OPERA

BOUFFE REMINISCENT OF "DAMN YANKEES", SAID IN EFFECT, "WE
GOTTA GET BETTER CAUSE WE CAN'T GET WORSE."
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 11 JUN 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATO06394
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741185/abbryynr.tel
Line Count: 383
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. USNATO 6115
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 MAR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <24 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DRC MULTILATERAL REVIEW - ITALY
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, IT
To: STATE
SECDEF INFO ROME
CINCLANT
USCINCEUR
USLOSACLANT
USNMR SHAPE
MBFR VIENNA

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005